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Great Cities in America. By DELOS F. WILCOX. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910. Pp. 426.)

This volume is a recent addition to the valuable Citizen's Library of Economics, Politics, and Sociology, and will be of general interest to all students of American government, and of especial local interest to residents of the cities described. Considerable difference of opinion is bound to follow its reading by persons of the latter class.

After a brief introduction dealing with the nature of the modern city, its growing importance and influence in political affairs, and the conditions peculiar to cities in America, the author discusses in turn the following six leading cities: Washington, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Boston. The form of government, including charters, organizations, and activities, municipal finance, and municipal improvements are among the most important topics treated under each. With this material is combined considerable municipal history, including efforts at reform, their successes and failures. The author refrains from drawing comparisons or from using statistical charts or tables.

The general conditions and problems of each city are indicated, the author usually limiting himself to a statement of facts, although occasionally he expresses his observations or opinions in the form of broader generalizations. For instance, the anomalous political situation in the District of Columbia is severely criticized; the encouraging future of New York City is pointed out; the energy and power of Chicago are emphasized; and the relative stagnation in the growth of Boston is noted. A final chapter outlines the problems of great cities, with especial reference to city growth, and to the relation of great cities to concentration of power on the one hand and to democracy on the other.

While the picture drawn by the author is in many ways a dark one, he gives the impression of being broad-minded, impartial, and thoroughly informed; and hopeful signs already in evidence, as well as the lines along which municipal reform is most needed, are pointed out. An underlying optimism concerning the future of the American city and the ability of the American citizen to solve its problems brightens an otherwise sordid account of inefficiency and dishonesty. This suggestive book will be read with interest and profit not only by students of political science but by all who value intelligent citizenship in municipal affairs.

RAYMOND GARFIELD GETTELL.